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A

SERMON

Preach'd at

BLACK FRIARS,

TO A

SOCIETY

OF

YOUNG MEN,

On JANUARY 1. 1715.

By JEREMIAH BURROUGHS.

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COLOSS. iii. 2.

Set your Affection on things above, not on things on the Earth.

THE Love of this World is a Principle deeply rooted in the Minds of Men. In the firſt part of Life we begin an early Acquaintance with ſenſible things, and are afterwards bred up in a conſtant Familiarity with them; and by this means they daily inſinuate themſelves farther and farther into our Eſteem: Inſomuch, that the far greateſt part of Mankind know no other Happineſs, but are wholly taken up in the Purſuit of a vain World, regardleſs of any thing beyond it: For this *they riſe up early, and ſit up late, and eat the Bread of Carefulneſs:* On this Idol alone they look with pleaſure, and fondly gaze on its falſe Charms, unmindful of the ſuperiour Luſtre and Glory of heavenly Objects.

But now it is the Deſign of the Goſpel, to call us off from too great an Attention to preſent things, and engage us to turn our Eyes up to a better World; to looſen our Affections from Earth, and lift the Soul to Heaven. For this purpoſe we are

often told, that the Happineſs which our Saviour deſigns for his Followers and Diſciples, is not to be enjoyed here on *Earth*, but reſerved in *Heaven* for us; and that the Glories of the upper World far out-ſhine all thoſe Vanities which here ſparkle in the Eyes of Men, and conſequently ought to be more regarded by us. This is the conſtant Language of *Scripture*, and accordingly the *Apoſtle* exhorts us in the Words I have now read to you, *Set your Affection on things above, not on things on the Earth*, i. e. rather than upon earthly things. For we muſt not extend the Words ſo far, as if they were deſign'd to forbid all manner of Concern for the Enjoyments of this lower World: No, God allows us to ſet a moderate Value upon them, as he knows them to be neceſſary for us in our preſent State. Nay, whilſt we live here on Earth, it is our Duty to ſeek after the proper Accommodations of Life with Diligence, and to do otherwiſe is a Crime. But then there is a greater Regard due to heavenly Things, and theſe muſt be ſure to have the Preference. We muſt ſeek Heaven in the *firſt Place*, make that our principal Care, and not be *ſo much* concern'd about any thing in this World, as about the Happineſs of another.

In diſcourſing therefore on theſe Words, I ſhall,

I. *Explain to you what is implied in ſetting our Affection on things above*, and then,

II. *Lay before you ſeveral Reaſons that ſhould perſuade us to ſuch a Behaviour.*

I. I begin with conſidering what is *implied* in *ſetting our Affection on things above*. And becauſe the Phraſe here uſed is of a very large Extent, to let you the better into the full Meaning of it, I

ſhall

ſhall give you, in ſeveral Particulars, the *Character* or *Deſcription* of a good Man, who minds heavenly things in ſuch a manner as the Text requires.

Firſt, He *thinks often of them.* Indeed heavenly Objects are now at a great diſtance. Yonder Heavens are high above this Earth, ſo far is the Chriſtian's Happineſs now above his Head: But however, he ſends up his Thoughts towards that World where he himſelf cannot yet come. He firmly believes that *there is a Reſt remaining for the People of God*; that there are glorious things deſign'd for good Men in a future World; theſe he looks on as the greateſt Realities, and therefore loves to meditate upon them.

Do wicked Men ſuffer vain Thoughts to be perpetually crouding into their Minds? Do they invite them in, and entertain, and lodge them there? Have they no room for any thing elſe? The Chriſtian on the other hand frequently retires from the World and its Vanities to view a brighter Scene. He aſcends in Contemplation above all ſeen things, pierces the Veil, and enters into Heaven, and there mixes with the Angels. He preſſes forward, in his Thoughts, towards the Throne of God himſelf, and from thence looks around on the wide-extended Regions of Light and Glory. He ſurveys with Wonder and Pleaſure the large Purchaſe of a Redeemer's Blood, and counts up *what is the Hope of Chriſt's Calling, and what the Riches of the Glory of his Inheritance* prepared for the Saints.

Theſe are the noble Subjects that employ a Chriſtian's frequent and ſerious Meditation. Nay, his Thoughts will naturally take this Train, and when left to themſelves, mount up to Heaven of their own

own accord. Do others carry the World about with them continually, into their Cloſets, and the Houſe of God? Are earthly things in their Hearts, even when Prayers are in their Mouths? Do they engage in the moſt *heavenly Duties* with a *worldly* Frame and Temper of Mind? The Chriſtian's Mind ſtands bent juſt the other way, and he has often *Heaven* in his Thoughts, even amidſt his common *worldly Affairs* and Employment.

Secondly, He *highly prizes and eſteems them.* He not only believes, and ſeriouſly thinks of heavenly things, but his Heart is raviſh'd with the Love of them. Though he does not underſtand their full Value, yet he diſcerns ſo much of their Worth and Excellence, that, charm'd with it, he embraces them and throws away other things from his Arms. As Heaven is the higheſt Happineſs, he fixes his ſupreme Love upon it, and deſpiſes every thing elſe in Compariſon of it. In vain does the World ſollicit his Eſteem, in vain with Smiles and Flatteries court his Love: In his Eyes, that are ſtruck with a brighter Ray, earthly things are mean and contemptible; as when one has been looking at the Sun and is dazled with its Splendor, other things now appear dark to him, and deſtitute of their former Beauty and Luſtre.

Thirdly, He *ſeeks an Intereſt in them.* This is a *Principal Step* in our Purſuit of heavenly things, and till a Man is come *thus far*, he can take but little Comfort in the Contemplation of them. Tell ſuch a one never ſo often of the other World, paint out its Glories in the moſt lively Colours poſſible, *Alas!* [ſays he] *all this is nothing to me, let Heaven be glorious, I have* no Part nor Lot in this Matter; *even theſe Joys themſelves ſpeak Terror to me, ſo long as I ſtand excluded from them.* And hence the

the Soul that is throughly ſenſible of the Worth of the heavenly Felicity, earneſtly wiſhes that this may be his Portion; accordingly he ſets himſelf to comply with the Terms on which alone it is to be obtain'd, and endeavours to *lay hold on eternal Life* by a ſincere Faith in Chriſt, and Repentance of all his Sins; that ſo, when he looks up to Heaven, and ſurveys the happy Manſions there, when he thinks of the Preſence of God, the Society of Angels, and the Treaſures of the celeſtial Kingdom, he may be able to add, *All this is mine, thoſe immenſe Treaſures, that Crown of Glory, all the Happineſs of that World is what I hope to be one Day advanced to.*

Fourthly, He *prepares for the Enjoyment of them.* He doth not ſeparate the Means from the End, but takes the one as it lies in a cloſe Connexion with the other, having ſet his Face *Sion*-ward, he directs his Steps thither. All his Actions tend that way, and *declare what Country he ſeeks.* You may plainly ſee, that he deſigns for Heaven by the whole Courſe and Tenor of his Behaviour. He endeavours after an heavenly Temper and Diſpoſition of Mind, to have the Image of God reſtor'd in his Soul, and every Grace planted there, which will render him like the bleſs'd Inhabitants of the other World. He aims alſo to have his Practice reſemble theirs as much as poſſible; to be employ'd here on Earth in the ſame manner as they are in Heaven, that ſo he may hereafter be fit to joyn that bright Aſſembly. In a Word, He endeavours to *cleanſe himſelf from all Filthineſs both of Fleſh and Spirit, and to attain that Holineſs, without which no Man ſhall ſee the Lord:* And ſo *by a patient Continuance in well-doing, ſeeks for Glory, and Honour, and Immortality.*

He conſiders the Goſpel as a wiſe Inſtitution, fram'd on purpoſe for the training up of Souls for a better World. With this View he obeys its Precepts, and liſtens to its Inſtructions, and prizes its Ordinances: And he enters into the Aſſemblies of Publick Worſhip with ſome ſuch Thoughts as theſe, ----- I come here this Day to converſe with God, and Heaven; to get more Acquaintance with them, and ſome new Excitement of my Affections towards them; to know more of the upper World, its Pleaſures and Employments, and get one ſtep forward in my way thither.

Fifthly, He *longs for the actual Poſſeſſion of them.* The Generality of Mankind could be well enough content to ſtay always here on Earth, if it were poſſible, and would never ask or wiſh for a Remove; but the Chriſtian, whoſe Happineſs is in Heaven, cannot but deſire to be there.

Indeed there are many things, which may ſerve to wean us from this World, and make us deſirous of a better State. Here we meet with daily Croſſes, and Afflictions, many Snares, and Temptations; the beſt have now ſad Remainders of Corruption, and a *Body of Sin* and *Death* that they carry about with them; and theſe things fill the Chriſtian with many ſorrowful Complaints, and make him often break out into the Language of the *Pſalmiſt*, *O that I had the Wings of a Dove, then would I fly away and be at Reſt!* O that I were once got ſafe to that World, where all Corruption ſhall be remov'd, and all Tears for ever wip'd away from my Eyes!

But now, beſides all this, what the Chriſtian knows of Heaven by preſent Experience, and that *partial* Fruition of God which he has here, makes him long for a perfect Enjoyment. Having taſted the

the Stream, he would run up to the Fountain: Having got the *Earneſt* of his Inheritance, he wiſhes for the full and entire Poſſeſſion of it. --- *Alas!* (ſaith he) it is but little that I enjoy of God, and Heaven at this diſtance; My Faith is weak and my Communion imperfect, often broken and interrupted: O when ſhall I get above theſe Clouds, that keep me from the clear ſight of him whom my Soul loves! When ſhall this Faith brighten into Viſion, and I no longer ſee him *through a Glaſs darkly*, but at a near View, unveil'd, and Face to Face! I *look*, I long *for the bleſſed Hope, and glorious Appearance of God and my Saviour*; *O when ſhall I come and appear before God!*

Thus I have given you the Deſcription of one who minds heavenly things, in ſuch a manner as the Text requires. And happy now is that Man who can ſay, *This is my Caſe: this is what I in ſome Meaſure experience in my own Soul.* Sure I am, it is what all of us ſhould ſeriouſly endeavour after. And this leads me to conſider,

II. The Reaſons which ſhould engage us thus to *ſet our Affections on things above.*

Firſt, The Happineſs of Heaven is what we were made for. God has given us immortal Souls, capable of endleſs Felicity; and the great Deſign of our coming into this World is only, that by proper Methods we might be train'd up for a better State hereafter, and become *meet to be Partakers of the Inheritance of the Saints in Light.* As if God had ſaid to us, Go live a while on Earth, and then riſe to the heavenly Manſions: Spend a few Days or Years in preparing for it, and then receive a Crown of Glory.

So that not to mind things above is plainly to act below the Dignity of our Natures, and contradict the chief Design of our Creation. Come then and *let us reason together*, or let every Man now say to himself, *Why was I made capable of enjoying God, but that I might chuse him as my sovereign Happiness? What was I sent into this World for, but to prepare for Heaven? and what then do I here, if I am not thinking of that better World? In vain do I busy my self about earthly Cares and Pleasures; in vain is Life it self, or worse than so, if I neglect that Happiness which is the great End of my very Being.*

Secondly, This Happiness all of us, as Christians, profess to seek after; and therefore to act otherwise, is in effect to renounce our Baptism, and disown Christianity it self. At our Baptism. when we are first receiv'd into the Christian Society, and lay Claim to the Privileges of it, we oblige our selves to a suitable Behaviour; and in this Ordinance, every one either virtually or expressly takes this solemn Oath. *I here disclaim the Devil for my Master, and this World for my Happiness; I take God for my Sovereign, and Heaven for my Home: I'll lay up my Treasure there, my Heart shall be there, and my whole Life be spent in a diligent Preparation for it.* And therefore, after we have in this manner turn'd our Backs upon the World, if we turn to it again; if we suffer earthly things to get Possession of our Hearts, so as to shut out God, and Christ, and Heaven; if we have no Value for, and are under no Concern to prepare for the heavenly Happiness; what's all this but to renounce our Baptismal Covenant; undoe all that was then done for us, and instead of answering the Obligation we are under, tear the Bond it self in pieces?

Thirdly, Chriſt is in Heaven. When our Saviour had offer'd up himſelf as an attoning Sacrifice, and *purged our Sins by the Blood of his Croſs, he ſat down at the Right Hand of the Majeſty on high.* Having finiſh'd that part of our Salvation which was to be perform'd here on Earth, he aſcended into Heaven to carry on the Work there. He entred as our *Fore-runner*, to take Poſſeſſion of the Inheritance in our Right and Stead; and as our *Mediator*, to make Interceſſion for us: and *there* he ever lives, to procure for us all thoſe Bleſſings that we now ſtand in need of, and at length receive us to eternal Glory. And this now lays us under the moſt endearing Engagement, to *ſeek thoſe things that are above, where Chriſt is at the Right Hand of God.* Methinks we ſhould find it harder to attend to *this*, than to the *other World*, when we have ſuch Motives, and ſo bright an Object to call our Attention that way. O bleſſed Jeſus! ſhall not all thy Love be able to draw up our Hearts to thy ſelf? Didſt thou leave Heaven for our ſakes, and can't we turn away our Eyes from a few Vanities, to lift them up to Heaven and Thee? Yes, dear Redeemer, we own thy Love, and would be ever mindful of thee and all that thou haſt done, and art ſtill doing for us; we would live in the daily Contemplation of that World where thou art, and hope one Day to be *abſent from the Body, that we may be preſent with the Lord.*

Fourthly, Earthly things are mean and worthleſs, compar'd with things above. The Happineſs of Heaven is as great as we can deſire, large as our Wiſhes, and even beyond our Conceptions. But on the other hand, it is not in the *Power* of *this World*, or all things in it, to make us truly happy. Vanity is written with a Sun-beam upon all temporal Enjoyments.

ments. They can't afford us any real, ſolid Satisfaction; We may have them and be miſerable ſtill. This he aſſures us of, who made them, and beſt underſtands their Value: And this Truth our own Experience muſt witneſs to, if we would ſuffer our ſelves to ſpeak impartially in the Matter. Alas, what did we ever meet with in the World *real* beſides Vexation? Indeed it makes fair Promiſes, and we liſten to its Flatteries with the fondeſt Eaſineſs imaginable; but when did it ever anſwer our Expectations from it? How ill does it requite us at laſt for our *Pains* in the Purſuit of it, our *Anxiety* about it, *Impatience* in expecting, and the many *Mortifications* we meet with in our way? Is not even the vain Pleaſure of *hoping* for earthly things often greater than that of *enjoying* them? And what's the reaſon? Whilſt they are at a Diſtance we can abuſe our ſelves into a Belief of their Value, but Poſſeſſion undeceives us. And hence, we are commonly no ſooner Maſters of any particular Wiſh, but we *confeſs* our Diſappointment, by preſently turning to ſomething elſe, and repeating the vain Enquiry, *Who will ſhew us any Good?* Who will direct us to that ſolid Happineſs, which we have miſs'd in this and the other Purſuits? And how poor a thing then is all this World, where the very gratifying of our Wiſhes, many times abates of our Happineſs inſtead of increaſing it! Is it for *this*, that we offend God, and deſpiſe the Offers he makes us? For *this*, that we ſuffer Heaven and all its Glories to ſtand by neglected and unregarded? Lord, how amazing is our *Folly!* and how aſtoniſhing thy *Patience*, that ſuch monſtrous Contempt of thee ſhould not immediately inflame thy Wrath, and arm thy Hand with *Thunder* for our Ruin aud Deſtruction!

Fifthly,

Fifthly, *Earthly things are of ſhort Duration*, though we could amuſe our ſelves *for a while*, with the Vanities that here ſurround us, it is not long that we can do ſo. They are frail and ſhort-liv'd, and liable to be loſt every Moment. *Riches* may be ſtruck out of our Hands, and forc'd to change their Maſters; *Honours* are uncertain as the Wind, or the Breath of thoſe that beſtow them. All theſe things at beſt are only like thoſe artificial Fires that ſhed a beautiful Light for the time they laſt, but are of very ſhort Continuance.

If we are not diſturb'd in our Enjoyment of the World *before*, yet *Death* will ſoon come and put an end to the Charm; in a few Hours more we muſt have done with this World *for ever*. Then none of thoſe things that we have moſt valu'd here on Earth, will be prevail'd on to ſtay one Moment, or take one Step with us in our important Journey; but we muſt go out of the World, as we came into it, naked and ſtript of all things. Such an Hour will certainly come, and God alone can tell how *near* it may be to every one of us. Nay, methinks I *already* feel the Approaches of Sickneſs and Death: I ſee my Friends weepingaround me, and waiting to cloſe my Eyes: I bid farewel to 'em one after another, and wrap my ſelf in my Winding-Sheet, and lie down in a Grave. And *now* what's all this World to me! Where's its boaſted Happineſs! And what Madneſs is it then, for us to ſet our Hearts on what we are juſt leaving! Since *we have here no continuing City*, ſure we ſhould be ſeeking *one that is to come*, and that *has Foundations eternal in the Heavens*; an Happineſs as laſting as our immortal Souls; ſomething that will not grow old and die, or that we ſhall not be torn away from, but will follow us

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to the Grave and beyond it, and ſtand by us when this whole World ſhall be in Flames.

Sixthly, *The minding of earthly things more than things above, muſt end in our Ruin and Deſtruction.* Are we willing to be ſhut out of Heaven another Day? Can we bear the Thought of being hereafter baniſh'd from God, and all the Joys of his Preſence? And yet this muſt certainly be the Caſe, if we ſeek no Acquaintance with heavenly things now. In vain do we hope to enjoy Heaven, if we make no Preparation for it. Where this is wanting, when we only value the preſent World, and eagerly graſp at its Enjoyments, we in effect renounce all Claim to any future Happineſs, and *judge our ſelves unworthy of eternal Life.* Nay, ſuch a Behaviour will not only exclude us out of Heaven, but ſink us into the Flames of Hell.

Indeed, as I obſerv'd at firſt, whilſt we are in the World, a *moderate* Concern about preſent things is both lawful and neceſſary for us; and God has promiſed them, and his Bleſſing too along with them, if we ſeek them only in their proper Place. But when we love the World, as if there was nothing valuable beſides it; when we turn all our Wiſhes this way, and forſake Heaven to run after preſent Vanities, we ſhall find them one Day prove our utter Ruin. If inſtead of only taſting the Stream for our neceſſary Refreſhment, we will needs throw our ſelves headlong into it, what can we expect but to periſh there? Little indeed do Men think of it; when they are warm in the Purſuit of Riches, Honours or Pleaſures, and hurrying along the deceitful Path, little do they conſider where it will iſſue at laſt. But this is what God himſelf aſſures us of, when, ſpeaking of ſuch Perſons, He thus deſcribes them, *whoſe End is Deſtruction,*

ſtruction, whoſe God is their Belly, who glory in their Shame, who mind earthly things. And ſay then, What if there be a few ſhort-liv'd tranſitory Pleaſures to be met with in ſinful Courſes, when Hell is at the end of them? Is the way ſmooth and eaſy and delightful? Alas! it leads down to the Chambers of Death. And where's the Advantage then? *What ſhall it profit a Man to gain the whole World, and loſe his own Soul?* Shall we deſtroy our *Souls* to gratify our *Senſes?* Or think it enough to make a Figure in *this World*, and periſh in the *next*; be pleas'd *for a while*, and ruin'd and undone *for ever?*

And now, as the Application of the foregoing Diſcourſe, let me beſeech every one of you to comply with the Exhortation of the Text. I hope what has been ſaid is ſufficient to convince us how reaſonable ſuch a Behaviour is, and what then ſhould hinder us from ſetting about it? We are now entring on a New Year, and certainly we cannot begin it *better*, than by endeavouring to ſecure that Happineſs which is the great end of Life. *Others* perhaps are thinking how to advance themſelves in the World this Year, and make Additions to their earthly Treaſures; let it be *your Care and mine to lay up for our ſelves thoſe Treaſures in Heaven* that are of infinitely greater Value, and more laſting Duration. Nay, why ſhould it be hard to perſuade us in a Matter of this Nature? What did we ever meet with in the *World*, to make us fond of it? Or what is there in the Proſpect of *Heaven* to affright us?

" Come then, O my Soul, be true to thy own " Intereſt, and reſolve this Day for God and Hea- " ven in good earneſt. Alas! this World has but " too long deluded me; I muſt ſay from ſad Ex- " perience, that I have found it vain and worth- " leſs; its Promiſes falſe, its Enjoyments empty

" and unſatisfying, and only its Troubles real; but
" when I look up to yonder Heavens, there I find
" what anſwers all my Wiſhes; there all is bright
" and glorious, a Happineſs complete and everlaſt-
" ing; in *thy Preſence, O Lord, is Fulneſs of Joy,*
" *and at thy Right Hand are Pleaſures for evermore.*
" To thee therefore, O my God, I now ſolemnly
" devote my ſelf; to love Thee, and think of Thee,
" and prepare to enjoy Thee. Though I walk up
" and down on this *earthly Globe*, my Converſation
" ſhall be in *Heaven*, and my chief Care about that
" better World. Let others take *this World* for me,
" let who will be rich or great here on Earth, 'tis
" Heaven that I wiſh and pant for, nor is there any
" thing below the Skies that can make me happy.

Methinks I would ſuppoſe this to be the Language of every one in this Aſſembly, and eſpecially of thoſe to whom I ſhould more particularly addreſs my ſelf on this Occaſion.-----You are now in that part of Life, when the Enjoyments of the World appear to the greateſt Advantage. In Youth all things around us look *freſh and inviting*, and the Proſpect that we then have of much Time before us, and a long Poſſeſſion of earthly things, ſerves to heighten their Value with us. But however, let nothing of this Nature make you forget your God, or your immortal Souls; let not *Heaven* give way to *Earth*, or a *Crown of Glory* be barter'd away for *Dreams* and *Shadows*. Does the World ſmile, and make many Promiſes? O believe it not, hearken not to its Flatteries; but only take Advantage of the Offers it makes you, to put the greater Contempt upon it, and make a more acceptable Sacrifice of your Hearts to God.

And if you have *already* been in ſome Meaſure ſenſible of the Worth of Heaven, and ſought after it as your principal Happineſs, let me intreat you

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to perſevere with *Conſtancy* in ſuch a Courſe. You have no Reaſon to repent of the Choice you have made; be not then weary of well-doing, nor ever ſuffer your ſelves to loſe that Senſe of the beſt things which you have at ſome times had, but on the contrary cheriſh and improve it. Strive to be ſtill more ſerious, and more in earneſt with God and your own Souls than ever you have hitherto been: Endeavour to get daily farther acquainted with the Glories of the upper World, and to be more ardent in your Deſires after it: Watch againſt the leaſt *Indifference* or *Coldneſs* in this reſpect, and chide your ſelves when you find it at any time growing upon you; and turn your Minds to every Thought that may ſerve to warm you, and ſtir up your Love, and quicken the heavenly Flame.

And for this End I ſhall now lay before you ſome *Advantages* that will ariſe to us from thus *ſetting our Affection on Things above*. As,

Firſt, If we ſeek this Happineſs we may be ſure of obtaining it. Other things indeed we may ſet our Hearts upon, and take a great deal of Pains in the Purſuit of, and yet after all be ſadly diſappointed. Nay, here on Earth, nothing is more common than for Perſons to miſs of their Wiſhes. Thouſands ruin themſelves eternally, and loſe their immortal Souls in the bare Chace of that miſtaken Happineſs which they never overtake, or come at the Poſſeſſion of. And it is but juſt that it ſhould be ſo with us, that when we deſpiſe Heaven, and prefer a few Vanities before it, God ſhould deny us *even them*; refuſe us the Idol we are ſo unreaſonably fond of, advance into his Throne, and offer up that Incenſe to, which is due only to himſelf. But now, on the other Hand, the Path that is mark'd out in the Goſpel leads directly to the Preſence of

God, and all the *Pleaſures that flow at his Right Hand.* No Man was ever diſappointed of the heavenly Happineſs, who ſincerely valued and ſought after it. The *Blood of Chriſt has purchaſed it for all ſuch*, and the *Promiſe of God inſur'd it to 'em*; nor can any thing prevent or hinder their Enjoyment of it.

Secondly, A due Attention to heavenly Things will make all the other parts of Religion pleaſant and delightful to us. It is a common Complaint among Chriſtians, that they find their Hearts backward to their Duty, and that it is *very hard* to keep up any thing of Delight in Matters of Religion; though, on the other Hand, they are eaſily betray'd into almoſt every Snare that the Devil and the World lay for them. And it is to be feared that there is but too much Reaſon for ſuch a Complaint as this. But now, what's all this owing to? It muſt doubtleſs in a great Meaſure be aſcrib'd to our want of Acquaintance with *Things above*, and ſerious Attention to them. We ſet the great Motives out of ſight that muſt animate and put Life into all our Endeavours after Holineſs. Did we more frequently *think of an unſeen World*; did we more reallize to our ſelves, and by Faith converſe with the Glories of it; *O what manner of Perſons ſhould we be in all holy Converſation and Godlineſs!* How warm our Hearts, and how bright our Lives! Having Heaven in our Eye, we ſhould ſoon find Pleaſure in the way that leads to it; and ſo *lay aſide every Weight, and the Sin that does moſt eaſily beſet us, and run with Chearfulneſs the Race that is ſet before us.*

Thirdly, This will ſerve to arm us againſt Temptations. If our Thoughts and Affections were more ſet on heavenly things, *then* we ſhould not be ſo eaſy

ſy a Prey to our ſpiritual Enemies in any inſtance, as we commonly are. *Then* the Attempts of *Satan* would have leſs Succeſs upon us. Though he ſhould hold up the Lure of worldly Pleaſure to invite us to Sin; though he make his greateſt Offers, and as to our Saviour upon the Mountain, ſet many Kingdoms in one View before us, all *this* would not engage us to *fall down* and *worſhip* him. The Soul that lives by Faith above the *Stars*, would from *that Height* look down upon the wideſt Scene below with Contempt and Indignation. Alas, ſays he, that *whole World there* were not a Temptation large enough to entice me away from hence.

Fourthly, This will afford us Comfort at all thoſe Seaſons when we ſhall moſt ſtand in need of it, in a time of *Affliction*, at *Death*, and at *a Judgment Day*.

1. *In a time of Affliction.* Among all the numerous Evils of Life, one of the greateſt is, that we have *here* no Remedy for them. In a thouſand Inſtances, this World is incapable of doing us any Service; our beſt Friends can only weep over us, hear our Complaints and pity us, without being able to afford us any Help or Comfort; and after we have in vain turn'd our Eyes round to every thing here on Earth that could promiſe Relief, we are forc'd at laſt to lift them up to Heaven, and ſay, *Help Lord from Trouble, for vain is the Help of Man.* True Comfort is only to be fetch'd down from the upper World: And happy then is that Man who lives in the conſtant Exerciſe of Faith upon it. He has *this* as a ſure Cordial at hand in every Hour of Diſtreſs. Doth he groan beneath the Weight of many Sorrows? Doth he drag a heavy Croſs after him through the World? or is he call'd to ſuffer Perſecution it ſelf? He throws all his Afflictions together, puts them, as it were,

in

in one Scale and Heaven in the other; and after having weigh'd and conſider'd Matters throughly, pronounces with joy, *I reckon*, I am aſſured, *that the Sufferings of this preſent time are not worthy to be compared with the Glory that ſhall be revealed in us.*

2. *At Death.* It were certainly very well worth our while to make Religion the Buſineſs of our *whole Lives*, if it were only to prepare for the *End* of them; For how dreadful muſt it be to leave *this World*, without having made any Proviſion for *another*. What! to be torn from all I ever counted dear and happy; to have every Bleſſing ſtruck out of my hands, and be driven away to the Borders of an eternal World, and there ſtand trembling on the Precipice; Look down with Horror into the vaſt Abyſs below, and expect every Moment to be puſh'd off into it, and have nothing to *hope* for there, but endleſs Miſery to *fear*: Lord, how awful is it! And yet now this is the caſe of all thoſe who only purſue preſent things, and look no farther. To *die*, with regard to them, is to part with all their Happineſs at once, and that too with the ſad Expectation of Hell in the room of it. And herein therefore appears the unſpeakable Advantage of minding *things above*, that it prepares us for an eaſy comfortable Death: It looſens our Affections from the World before-hand, breaks the Bands by which we were tied to it, and ſo makes the Parting eaſier. This Life was not the Chriſtian's Happineſs, and therefore he can readily reſign it. He always conſider'd himſelf as a Stranger on Earth, and ſo is not ſurpriz'd at the Thoughts of a Remove: Eſpecially conſidering whither he is going, that it is not into a ſtrange World or an unknown State; but the Place he knows, and the Way he knows, and has ſome good Hope, through Grace, that when

when this earthly Houſe of his Tabernacle is diſſolv'd, he ſhall be receiv'd into everlaſting Habitations. This *Hope* gives a bright Proſpect before him, and enlightens the dark Valley of the Shadow of Death which he is to paſs through.

3. *At a Judgment Day.* When our Lord only mentions the Signs that will fore-run his ſecond Coming, the Account is enough to make one tremble: The Sun turned into Darkneſs, the Moon into Blood, the Stars falling from Heaven, and Mens Hearts failing them for fear, and for looking after the things that are coming upon the Earth. But now, if the very *thought* of a Judgment Day, whilſt yet at a *diſtance*, be ſo awful; if a few *preparatory* Circumſtances, and the firſt *Notice* of our Lord's Approach, will thus alarm a guilty World; what muſt be its Confuſion, when the great and terrible Day *it ſelf* ſhall come; when that Trumpet ſhall ſound that will rend the World to its Foundations; *When the Heavens ſhall paſs away with a great noiſe, and the Elements melt with fervent Heat*; when *the Earth* and its Works *ſhall be burnt up*, this great Stage of Action broken down, and all its Furniture caſt into the Flames; when the univerſal Judge ſhall appear on his Tribunal, with Millions of Angels in his Train, and Thunder ſhall ſummon all the World before him! Oh with what Conſternation will the Sinner now look up, that would never regard Heaven till he ſee it thus array'd in Terrors; nor think of a Redeemer till he meet him on his Throne arm'd with Wrath and Vengeance! *In vain* will the Wretch attempt to fly the Preſence of his Judge: In vain call to Rocks and Mountains to fall on him, Words can't expreſs the Horror that muſt ſeize on him at ſuch a time.

But now on the other hand, the heavenly-minded

ed Chriſtian will find matter of Joy and Comfort even in *this* awful Scene. *This* Man will ſee the Heavens on fire, and hear the laſt Trumpet ſound without Terror. He who had often hop'd and pray'd for Chriſt's ſecond Appearance, will now rejoice to ſee him coming in the Clouds *with Power and great Glory*. Rais'd into Tranſport at this Sight, he will ſtand chearfully on the Ruins of a periſhing World, and ſay; "This is the happy day "that I have long expected; This the great Tri- "umph I have often entertain'd my ſelf with the "diſtant View and Proſpect of: 'Tis *He* my "Great Redeemer that ſhines in all that Blaze of "Glory; 'twas thus he promiſed to come and "fetch his Saints to their Inheritance; Welcome, "Dear Saviour, to my Arms and everlaſting Em- "braces; Welcome my Crown of Glory, and all ye "bright innumerable Guards who wait to receive "me to your World; There, there my Heart has "long been fixt, my beſt Affections have been ſent "before; my *Life* was *hid with Chriſt in God*, and "now *Chriſt* who is my *Life appears*, I alſo come "to *appear with him in Glory*.

Such will be the Triumph of the heavenly-minded Chriſtian at the *Laſt Day*, and God grant it may be the Happineſs of all of us.

F I N I S.

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